

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1397

By Evans

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the members of Bethel Baptist Church upon the occasion of the church's 125th anniversary celebrated on June 13, 2010.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pride in recognizing those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, in May, 1885, the United Baptist Church of Christ, now known as Bethlehem Baptist Church in rural Springfield, granted to eleven members letters of dismissal for the purpose of organizing a church outside the Ridgetop and Greenbrier communities; this church became known as Bethel Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church has been worshipping and serving God on the corner of Bethel Road and Howell Road for almost a century and a quarter and has made significant contributions to the civic, educational, and social fabric of Greenbrier and Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church has been an associate and partner with the community and state in peril and in prosperity, in war and in peace, in tragedy and in triumph; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church is a church family with a rich history of commitment and continuity among its members; many of the present-day members can trace their heritage back for generations, some tracing their roots directly back to the earliest members listed in the church's records, and many individuals and families alike have been actively involved in serving the Lord and supporting church programs and activities at Bethel Baptist Church for twenty-five

years or more; the faith and solidarity of these people has served to preserve this revered place of worship; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church could not have become such an integral and historic part of their community had it not been for the dedicated leadership of a great many pastors and staff who have faithfully guided the church and ministered to the community through the many years of its existence; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church is among those institutions upon which a just and orderly society is based; it is a focal point for our citizens to worship their Creator as a community of faith and from which they reach out to the secular community as a response to God's saving grace; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Baptist Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our state and nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize the members of Bethel Baptist Church upon the occasion of the church's 125th anniversary and extend to this exceptional congregation our best wishes for much continued success in performing God's work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.